

ICOMOS
International Scientific Committee on Historic Towns and Villages (CIVVIH)
Bureau Meeting
November 4, 2020
Via ZOOM

Present were:

PRESIDENT

Claus-Peter ECHTER, Germany

VICE-PRESIDENT

Samir ABDULAC, France

Faika BEJAOU, Tunisia

SECRETARY GENERAL

Kathleen CROWTHER, USA

HONORARY EXPERT MEMBERS

Sofia AVGERINO KOLONIAS, Greece

Also in Attendance

Margaret LANN, USA

1. Approval of the Agenda: All present approved the Agenda.
2. Scientific Work Programs: Samir Abdulac provided a report on his work in Syria as chair of the ICOMOS Syria/Iraq WG. The ICOMOS Secretariat, along with other ISCs and NGOs, plays important roles concerning heritage in Syria. Work involves communicating information and training professionals on-the-ground. One should take into account there are significant changes from 8-9 years ago. The so-called Islamic state is defeated and there is no more destruction of monuments except on the front lines. In Syria, the country is divided and in a bad economic state. There is no large-scale strategy, except those in Aleppo (and Mosul) where UN Habitat and UNESCO, are also operating. A report has been produced which Samir can send to those interested. There are small-scale restorations underway, particularly in the souks which are so important and represent tangible and intangible heritage. The first request of the populace to restore the souks. Souks are specific to oriental countries and are viewed as leverage for future economic development. There are different approaches to rebuilding the souks. Some approaches are led by the local authorities, other approaches are guided by various NGOs. All efforts prove that heritage could be a driver for sustainable development.

Young people graduating from heritage degree programs and professional want to join together for a Syrian national committee because they want a link with the outside world. They can be cut off economically and politically. They should be encouraged to develop into a national committee. The ICOMOS Secretariat has received 160 individual applications because there is not a national committee in Syria. This is the correct process, but application have now been halted due to the onslaught. An interim steering committee has been established that must produce operating

statutes. These statutes have to be approved by the ICOMOS Board and Syrian authorities. After this, elections may be held to form the final Steering Committee.

There is a general problem that young professionals would like to become ICOMOS members but they need two (2) recommendations in order to do so. Claus-Peter is in communication with many such young members. Countries where this is a concern include Iran and Egypt. A solution is needed. It is possible for these young professionals to join another national committee, another country could support them. Lebanon has a young national committee, it is only one year ago. This group was very effective after the Beirut explosion when 600 buildings were damaged, 60 of which were heritage buildings.

3. Membership: CIVVIH members from Lithuania are now suspended until there is the formation of a new national committee, now underway. CIVVIH has several important members from Lithuania who are excellent participants and do important work. Especially important is Marija NEMUNIENE who is a member of the Executive Vice President and Rugile Puodziuniene, CIVVIH's Emerging Professional who has done an excellent job managing the CIVVIH FaceBook page. There are 5-6 members in CIVVIH from Lithuania.

It was decided that these valuable members will not need to re-apply to join CIVVIH once the matter regarding the national committee is resolved, which could take some time. They are simply suspended until the time is right for them to return.

The situation is understood to be a delicate matter and one which saddens CIVVIH, but there is nothing CIVVIH can do until the matter is resolved at the Secretariat level. Marija NEMUNIENE can still be a member of CIVVIH but cannot represent Lithuania. These members can even apply to other countries. These two important members cannot do the work of CIVVIH until their suspended state concludes. However, their names shall remain on CIVVIH's published member list on the website. However, the Secretary General should not communicate with them. Other countries have gone through this problem in the past.

Claus-Peter brought up the matter of CIVVIH elections in 2021. A number of important CIVVIH leaders cannot stand for election next year because each has served three consecutive terms of three years. These individuals include Claus-Peter Echter, all five Vice Presidents including Danuta KLOSEK-KOZLOWSKA, Samir ABDULAC, Faika BEJAOUJ, David LOGAN, Zhang JIE, and Gergerly NAGY, who is on the Executive. Of the Bureau, the only one who could stand for election is Kathleen Crowther, and of the Executive, Eman ASSI, Paula CORDEIRO, Elena DIMITROVA, Yuksel DINCER, Hae UN RII, Ofelia SANOU, and Pal Anders STENSSON. CIVVIH has new bylaws, and has always complied with them.

It was agreed that there should be plans for leadership continuity, that we should now start looking at candidates. Many competent members may be found among CIVVIH members in China, Australia and India. All agreed it is important to make room for new people.

4. Update CIVVIH's Bylaws: CIVVIH has not yet received formal approval from the Secretariat, but it is expected. CIVVIH must act as though they have been accepted.

5. Ibero-American Subcommittee: Claus-Peter has worked hard on this matter and has been in constant communication with Álvaro Gómez-Ferrer Bayo and María Rosa Suárez-Inclán. María Rosa did not receive the invitation for Annual Meeting, but now she has it. Hopefully she will attend. Kathleen

sent an invitation to all Associate members the subcommittee, but none have responded. It may be that they are not particularly active in ICOMOS, perhaps they are retired. We shall see. Claus-Peter really likes the idea of having an electronic meeting with CIHIB. Alfredo Conti was very active, and he has been an important member of CIVVIH. There can be communication problems with the language barrier.

It was discussed that the Mediterranean Subcommittee has not been convened unlike other subcommittees. The term of the chair expires in 2021, a new chair must be elected. This subcommittee is very important as it represents southern Europe and the northern Middle East.

The matter of the update of the Valletta Principles was discussed. It was agreed that there shall be a CIVVIH update, but not an update that requires the ICOMOS process. This would take too long. Sofia asked for clear direction on this to alleviate unrealistic expectations. A document can be developed but it cannot be written by a large number of people because that is unrealistic. COVID-19 has seriously impacted progress on this and all need to be understanding. At the upcoming Annual Meeting, we will report and get CIVVIH opinions on our work.

The meeting was concluded.

Written by Kathleen H. Crowther, Secretary General

Approved by Claus-Peter Echter, President

DATE: January 25, 2021